

to the greatest advantage All the volumes, blue-books, pamphlets and periodicals bearing on the subject of Sweating that I could buy or borrow were read and extracted, the Charles Booth secretariat was asked to supply particulars of the work-shops within the area selected for exploration, classified according to the numbers employed in each, friends and relatives were pestered for introductions to public authorities, philanthropic agencies and all such enterprises (not only wholesale and retail clothiers, but also shippers, sewing machine companies and others) as were likely to have contact with East End workers, whether sub-contractors or wage-earners Once settled in the Devonshire House Hostel, my time was mainly occupied in interviewing employers and employed, School Board visitors, Factory and Sanitary Inspectors and members of the Jewish Board of Guardians, in visiting the home workers and small masters whom I happened to know, and in accompanying rent-collectors, or the collectors of payments due for the hire of sewing-machines, on their rounds of visits In the intervals of these interviews and observations I trained as a trouser-hand, successively in the work-rooms of the Co-operative Wholesale Society and in the 'domestic workshop' of a former tenant of Katharine Buildings, by way of preparation for 'finding work* during the busy season of the spring months "

The *Nineteenth Century* subsequently published the results of this particular piece of work in the shape of four articles, of which the one that scored a real success, rather to the author's own annoyance, was the *Pages of a Workgirl's Diary*¹—a vivid picture of her own direct experience as a not-too-competent trouser-hand in an East End sweater's workshop This, she says, was "my one and only literary 'success'", another was to follow, nearly forty years later, with the publication of *My Apprenticeship* Out

of her
investigations, as out of her experiences, she
was really
in a position to make a true diagnosis of the
Sweating
problem, although not one that she could
get accepted
at the time To her disgust, she found, when
she was
called to give evidence before the House of
Lords Committee
on the Sweating System, in May 1888, that
less attention

¹ Reprinted in *Problems of Industry*, by S and B Webb